



CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

AUG 19 1999

1414
**Public
Comment**

Date _____

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program welcomes your participation. Please use the space below for your written comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Comments:

Name: MARK NORTON

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Please return this form to:


CALFED
BAY-DELTA
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For more information,
(916) 657-2666
(800) 700-5752
<http://calfed.ca.gov>

Testimony to the CALFED BAY-DELTA Program Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority

My name is Mark Norton and I am with the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA). Our agency is a joint powers agency composed of the five major ^{water} districts that share the Santa Ana River Watershed. The Santa Ana Watershed covers an area of approximately 2650 square miles including parts of San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles and Orange Counties. It is home to about 5 million people. The focus of my comments tonight center on the groundwater storage component of CALFED's preferred program plan.

As background, current population projections for the Santa Ana Watershed Region indicate that this area will experience a 30% population growth by the year 2020, which translates into 1.5 – 2.0 million additional new residents. Increasing water demands to serve this new population will significantly stress the current water delivery system. The region currently relies on 400,000-acre feet of imported water annually, which is becoming increasingly unreliable due to Federal requirements that California reduce its use of Colorado River water. The economic stability of the region is dependent on developing and maintaining a clean and reliable water supply and on an emphasis toward self-reliance.

Over the last thirty years, SAWPA and its member agencies have been planning and dealing with the complex problems involved in watershed management. In order to assure a sustainable water supply for the future, SAWPA has proposed a regional program that will make the watershed entirely self sufficient during drought cycles, and not require increased imported water during normal water years. The benefits of the program will be felt by all water users within the service region and statewide as SAWPA reduces a significant portion of urban southern California's reliance on water transfers from the Sacramento- San Joaquin Delta and the Colorado River, especially during dry years.

One of the major elements of our regional program is the storage of water supply. Within the Santa Ana region there are several groundwater basins that can store water during wet years for use during drought cycles. In order to truly have a reliable water supply; the region needs to store three years worth of imported water supplies – 1,300,000-acre feet. One of the key basins we see for storing water is Chino Basin, which has available capacity of up to 1,000,000 acre-feet. Work is underway in discussions with Metropolitan Water District to start a groundwater banking program in Chino Basin.

In order to accomplish this local storage and reduce dependence on State Project Water from the Bay Delta, assistance is needed from the parties associated with the CALFED Bay Delta Program. In the past, CALFED representatives have collected information on potential conjunctive use locations in Southern California. This information was provided in March of 1999. We now encourage the CALFED Bay-Delta Program to move quickly in the selection of specific basins for conjunctive use storage in Southern California as suggested in Storage Program Element of the CALFED's resource management strategy. We encourage CALFED to specifically call out the Chino Basin in your implementation documents as the one of most viable storage locations for major conjunctive use storage in Southern California.

We also believe that under the CALFED Stage 1 Actions, funding should be specifically directed for conjunctive use storage in Chino Basin under the Integrated Water Management Bundle as a high priority action. SAWPA's member agencies and the local agencies in the Chino Basin are in a unique position to move quickly into the implementation of this major groundwater banking program at this time. Our agency is supportive of CALFED's adaptive management approach in recent planning documents and encourage the continued and expeditious progress in implementing the ^{groundwater} storage planning component of the Preferred Program Plan. Thank you.



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end of testimony